

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 21 are currently pending in the application.

Claims 14 through 21 are newly added with this amendment.

Claims 1 through 13 stand rejected.

Information Disclosure Statement(s)

Applicants filed an Information Disclosure Statement herein on March 16, 2004. The Examiner crossed-out the reference to Japan Patent No. 1-137658 because no copy of the patent was provided. Applicants are filing herewith a new PTO/SB/08 with a copy of the abstract of the Japan Patent. Please initial the reference on the PTO/SB/08 and return a copy of the initialed PTO/SB/08 to the Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Preliminary Amendment

Applicants' undersigned attorney notes the filing herein of a Preliminary Amendment on June 7, 2004, which filing was not acknowledged in the outstanding Office Action. Should the Preliminary Amendment have failed for some reason to have been entered in the Office file, Applicants' undersigned attorney will be happy to have a true copy thereof hand-delivered to the Examiner.

Double Patenting Rejection Based on U.S. Patent 6,323,543

Claims 1 through 13 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 10 through 13 and 28 through 36 of U.S. Patent 6,323,543. In order to avoid further expenses and time delay, Applicants elect to expedite the prosecution of the present application by filing a terminal disclaimer to obviate the double patenting rejections in compliance with 37 CFR §1.321 (b) and (c). Applicants' filing of the terminal disclaimer should not be construed as acquiescence in the Examiner's double patenting or obviousness-type double patenting rejections. Attached are the terminal disclaimer and accompanying fee.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1 through 21 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, he is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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